

**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RHODE ISLAND
DECEMBER 17, 2007 BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

BOARD MEMBERS (*DENOTES ABSENT)

Mario Bueno	Robert Nangle
Mia Caetano-Johnson*	George Nee*
Armeather Gibbs	Adelita Orefice
Saul Kaplan	Robert Paniccia
Paul MacDonald	Lorna Ricci*
Joseph MarcAurele	Cathy Streker
William McGowan	Martin Trueb
Brandon Melton	Jack Warner
Sharon Moylan	

Staff Present: M. Koback, S. Schaefer, N. Olson, D. Francis, M. Mooney

Guests: Joseph Cannon, Johan Uvin, Paul Harden, Ruth Ricciarelli, Linda Katz, Gail Patry, Michael Hogan

DLT Staff: Sandra Powell, John O'Hare, Lori Norris, Gail Theriault, Esq, Nick Ucci, Chris Grieco, Lisa D'Agostino, Connie Parks

Location: RI Department of Labor and Training (DLT), 1511 Pontiac Avenue, Cranston, RI

With a quorum present, Chair J. MarcAurele called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

A motion was entered to approve the October 17, 2007 Governor's Workforce Board meeting minutes.

VOTE on motion to approve: J. Warner moved to approve, seconded by C. Streker. All approved. Motion to vote passes.

VOTE to approve October 17, 2007 Governor's Workforce Board meeting minutes. All approved. October 17, 2007 minutes approved.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman MarcAurele reported that the Strategic Investment Committee has been working diligently and that he would provide an update later in the meeting. Chairman MarcAurele indicated that the work with the strategic plan was progressing well and that a successful effort has been achieved that engages many of the different constituencies that we work with. Chairman MarcAurele has requested that the current strategic planning document be summarized into 3-5 key elements in order to produce an effective plan that addresses the most important workforce issues. He indicated that by mid-spring, we should have a workable document on the strategic planning process.

Chairman MarcAurele thanked the committee chairs and members for their hard work this past year. He asked S. Kaplan, Director of the RI Economic Development Corporation (EDC), for an update on a recent meeting on the topic of mutual projects between DLT, EDC and the board. S. Kaplan provided an overview of the meeting which focused on the strategic planning process and the connection with the state's economic development plan. He stated his view that we

could better integrate the economic development strategy with the workforce development strategy and plan. He reported great progress resulting in the mutual agreement that this integration should occur. This was not the case historically. During the meeting with Chair MarcAurele and Director Orefice, S. Kaplan indicated that the key discussion points focused on how this integration between strategies should work. It was noted that a major goal of the EDC development plan is to create higher wage job opportunities for Rhode Islanders at every wage level. Still to be determined is how to reposition the economy in order to produce higher wage job opportunities. This will require collaboration between the GWB, DLT and the educational sector to frame the workforce with the projected strategies. Questions to be asked include "What does it mean to have a higher wage economy workforce?" and "Where are the opportunities to put new programs together?" The main focus is to ensure that the strategic plan from the GWB and from the EDC is in sync. S. Kaplan indicated that a specific proposal resulting from these discussions will be brought back to this board in January. He also indicated that he has met with J. Warner to discuss the role of the educational sector with this endeavor, specifically with CCRI.

Director Orefice noted that one of the challenges for the state is that EDC has its own strategic plan as well as DLT, GWB, PK-16 and the Commissioners of Higher Education. She stated that if we are managing this process correctly, that all of these plans will align. She mentioned her appreciation for Saul's effort to bring us together to work on these plans collaboratively.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Strategic Planning

M. Koback underscored the previous conversation by noting the GWB's participation with the Economic Policy Council (EPC) in joint meetings to discuss the alignment of each individual strategic plan. He indicated it was encouraging to engage with EPC collaboratively.

M. Koback referred to the handout in the meeting packet identifying the implementation schedule of the strategic plan since its inception which was presented to the Workforce Cabinet in January 2007. He noted that by April 2009, the strategy for a unified workforce plan should be complete. The unified workforce plan includes the framework of the strategic plan along with statutory and regulatory requirements.

M. Koback updated the board on the strategic planning process. He reported that the advisory group recommendations have been vetted through a group of stakeholders and practitioners as well as with the Workforce Cabinet. The Cabinet has enthusiastically endorsed these recommendations. Also, a steering committee will convene in January to further review the strategic planning documents for consolidation and clarity. The United Way is assisting with the funding of a resource mapping process. Additionally, a team of writers will be assigned to compose the strategies and measures of the agencies and stakeholders involved in the planning process. Focus groups will be convened and will be directed by the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW) consisting of additional stakeholders, and business partners. And finally, a survey is in development that will collect information on the investments of the private sector for training programs. This survey will be mailed to approximately 3,000 companies providing a 10% sampling of RI businesses. A key result of these planning strategies not only will eliminate duplication but will assist with the alignment of businesses, state agencies and the public sector. M. Koback mentioned that the consolidated strategic plan will go to the Planning and Evaluation Committee for further review.

Director Orefice reported that the Workforce Cabinet is extremely receptive to the strategic planning process. She explained to new board members that the Cabinet is made up of

colleagues in state government that have responsibility for workforce investment. These state agencies include the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), the Department of Corrections (DOC), RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE), RI Office of Higher Education and Mental Health Retardation and Hospitals (MHRH). She noted that many of the state workforce programs are on the table for consolidation due to state budget issues.

Comprehensive Workforce Training Grant RFPs

M. Koback reported that the RFP's for the next round of Comprehensive Workforce training grants were submitted and that there is a total of \$2.1 million in requests. He indicated the Strategic Investment committee will be meeting to approve the funding for these requests for this round and future rounds. He also indicated that the feedback from the business community is extremely positive noting the continuing work of the staff to streamline the process for funding requests.

P. MacDonald noted the importance of including the labor organizations in the survey mailing as they provide a great deal of training to their constituents, not only in the business and construction trades but on a broader basis. M. Koback noted the importance of this suggestion as the goal of the survey is to compile information on a total cross section of industries in RI.

P. Harden inquired about making the process for providing grant funds to businesses more timely. M. Koback reported that a request was submitted to the Department of Administration (DOA) some time ago and that we are waiting for the approval on the delegated authority process. Director Orefice indicated she is in constant contact with DOA on this and that the recent budget cutbacks and financial issues have taken a precedent in state government. M. Koback noted that the process of delegated authority will provide the GWB with the opportunity to provide grant funds on a rolling basis without the RFP process which is a more effective way to address the needs of the business community.

Chairman MarcAurele asked P. Harden if there is a big time lag between when the grant approvals come through from the Strategic Investment committee and the board and when the funding actually occurs. P. Harden indicated that he was referring to the rolling grant process and how that process would be more beneficial to address the training needs of companies.

S. Kaplan concurred that the rolling grant process would go along way toward meeting the training needs of the business community. Chairman MarcAurele indicated his strong support of this proposed rolling grant process noting that businesses are not always able to anticipate their training needs relative to the current RFP process.

APPRENTICESHIPS

M. Koback mentioned that a joint meeting of the Youth Development Committee (YDC) and the Apprenticeship Council follows the board meeting and he invited board members to attend. Grace Kilbane, the regional administrator from the Department of Labor (DOL), is scheduled to speak and will provide an overview of newly issued guidelines for the apprenticeship programs. M. Koback noted that apprenticeship programs are an additional way of providing training particularly for youth and that these programs are a component of the strategic plan.

CONSENT AGENDA (ITEMS 1-4)

M. Koback noted the consent agenda reporting it contains 4 agenda items including:

1. **WIA Consent Agenda:** New WIA policies listed for Program Year '07 were issued pursuant to federal policy. Hyperlinks to detailed information are provided on the WIA Consent Agenda where applicable.
2. **Workforce Expansion Grant:** The Strategic Investment Committee met on December 3rd and endorsed staff's recommendation to award a \$100,000 Workforce Expansion grant to RI Economic Development Corporation's Office of International Trade to continue to provide matching Export Management Training grants to RI companies planning and preparing for international business. Detailed information about the program is included.
3. **Administrative Entity Agreement:** On the advice of legal counsel and consistent with both state statute and the Governor's executive order, the administrative entity agreement formalizes the relationship between the GWBRI and RIDLT. The Executive Committee reviewed the agreement at its meeting on December 3rd and recommends approval by the full board.
4. **Amendments to the Board's Bylaws:** As required, the Executive Committee conducted its annual review of the bylaws and voted at its meeting on December 3rd to recommend the amendments. Proposed amendments were included and highlighted and emailed to the membership 15 days prior to the meeting as required. Legal counsel has also reviewed and endorsed the proposed amendments.

Chairman MarcAurele asked if there were any questions on the Meeting Consent Agenda items. Hearing none, Chairman MarcAurele entered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda (Items 1-4).

VOTE on motion to approve: B. McGowan moved to approve, seconded by B. Melton. All approved. Motion to vote passes.

VOTE to approve Consent Agenda (Items 1-4). All approved. Consent Agenda approved.

Committee Reports

Chairman MarcAurele opened up the meeting to committee chairs. He provided a brief overview of the work of the Strategic Investments Committee citing that the most important work involved the budget. He indicated that the committee will bring back to the full board a potential reallocation of some of the monies. He mentioned that 4-5 of the funding categories had loosely assigned budgets and that the funding for business retention would be reviewed. He noted another priority will be to further streamline the processes around investment in general to make the funding process more efficient and fair.

S. Kaplan suggested that he would like to be included in any meetings regarding the reprioritization of funding reallocations for business retention purposes. He further suggested the importance of including the Director of Business Development from EDC in these meetings to address business retention from both a workforce and economic perspective. This meeting could include discussion about the goal of funding options, constraints on how the funds are used, and the generation of new ideas. If it were determined that the reprioritization of funds was still the best option at least the discussion would validate the action. Chairman MarcAurele indicated that he is very open to this suggestion.

Director Orefice reported that at a recent DLT senior staff retreat, the issue of funding business retention initiatives was discussed as part of the discussion surrounding cost cutting initiatives. At this retreat, it was initially decided to consider reallocating the funding for this purpose. However, after a recent meeting led by Mark Troppe from the U.S. Department of Commerce, a different perspective for business retention goals was communicated to DLT staff. Director Orefice and others have been reconsidering taking into account this more proactive approach of ensuring that a company is viable and growing in order to be eligible for business retention funding.

Director Orefice indicated it might be best to consider the business retention funding as part of a pilot phase. She cautioned however, to go forward slowly as this is a new and innovative area for R.I. M. Koback concurred indicating it is important to create a team that works with business to assist in determining its needs for training, tax credits, resources, location, etc. S. Kaplan stated he does not want to miss this opportunity of collaboration with agencies in the marketplace doing this work together.

B. Melton briefly reported on the progress of the Youth Development Committee (YDC). He noted that the initial focus for this committee was primarily on summer youth employment programs. He expressed his appreciation to the GWB for its increased investment in youth programs. He indicated the expansion of the apprenticeship program to include more youth is an objective that would make a significant difference. B. Melton acknowledged the hardworking staff continuing with the leadership of L. Norris. He mentioned the recent Youth Confab was fantastic and that the partnership with local workforce boards was very positive.

B. McGowan noted that a Planning and Evaluation committee meeting would be scheduled for January.

M Koback reported on the 2nd Industry partnership forum that occurred in early December led by Julian Assid, Executive Director of Workforce Strategies and Solutions. The presentation was on the topic of sustainability. He explained the Industry partnerships series will continue during the year on different issues important to the partnerships. He thanked the United Way for providing funding for these forums. He also reported that the Industry Partnership contracts for year 2 funding are signed.

J. Warner acknowledged the work of the Adult Education and Literacy committee and particularly Johan Uvin for his work with this initiative. He reviewed the process around the adopted standards and projections for this work in the future. He acknowledged Johan's role as the lead for career and technical schools interfacing with the workforce cabinet and apprenticeship council in assisting youth with job development.

Chairman MarcAurele thanked the board members for the work over the past year and wished all a happy holiday season. With no other business to be discussed, Chairman MarcAurele entered a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Governor's Workforce Board.

VOTE on motion to approve: S. Kaplan moved to approve, seconded by J. Warner. All approved. Motion to vote passes.

VOTE to approve adjournment of Governor's Workforce Board meeting. All approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen F. Mooney